

REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **17 August 2007**, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-3, 5-7, and 34-44. Claims 1-3, 5-7, 34-36, and 39-44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Matson et al. (USPN 4,695,112 hereinafter "Matson"). Claims 37-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matson.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Independent claims 1, 34, 43, and 44 were rejected as being anticipated by Matson. Applicant respectfully points out that Matson discloses a **locking mechanism which prevents the forceful removal of terminals from connector housings** (see Matson column 1, lines 25-32; column 1, lines 44-46; column 3, lines 39-41; column 3, line 67 to column 4, line 2; and column 4, lines 19-24). Specifically, Matson discloses a resilient locking arm 48 which can flex to the bottom of the channel when plug 16 is inserted into connector 14; locking arm 48 then flexes towards the top surface so that lobe 50 enters into lock hole 22 (see Matson FIG. 2; and column 2, line 64 to column 3, line 7). Since locking arm 48 is flexible, this operation can be performed in reverse by lowering lobe 50 and pulling plug 16 out of connector 14. Hence, the terminals can be removed from the connector housing **without breaking or destroying** the connector housing and/or the terminals.

In contrast, some embodiments of the present invention provide a mechanism which proves that an assembly has been disabled (see page 3, lines 11-14 of the instant application). **After the mechanism is detached, it cannot be reattached** (e.g., it is physically broken off of the assembly) (see page 3, lines 19-24; page 4, lines 9-11; page 5, lines 7-9; page 6, lines 12-13; page 6, lines 19-21; and FIGs. 1-4 of the instant application). Hence, unlike the device

disclosed by Matson, in these embodiments of the present invention, *there is no way to detach the mechanism so that it can be reattached at a later time*. This is beneficial because an entity charged with disposal of the assembly can detach the mechanism to disable the mechanism and to prove that the assembly has been disabled (e.g., show the removed mechanism).

There is nothing in Matson which suggest a mechanism, which **after being detached cannot be reattached**, because, as described above, Matson inherently discloses a non-destructive way to detach the connector housing from the terminals. The fact that the device of Matson can be *broken* is irrelevant because Matson provides a non-destructive way to detach the connector housing from the terminals, and hence, after the device of Matson is detached non-destructively, it can be reattached. Thus, Matson does not anticipate the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 34, 43, and 44 to clarify that in some embodiments of the present invention, *the only way to detach the mechanism is to detach the mechanism from the circuit board so that the mechanism cannot be reattached to the circuit board*. These amendments find support on page 3, lines 19-24; page 4, lines 9-11; page 5, lines 7-9; page 6, lines 12-13; page 6, lines 19-21; and FIGs. 1-4 of the instant application.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 34, 43, and 44 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 2-3 and 5-7, which depend upon claim 1, and claims 35-42, which depend upon claim 34, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By /Gilbert Wong/
Gilbert Wong
Registration No. 57,990

Date: 17 October 2007

Gilbert Wong
PARK, VAUGHAN & FLEMING LLP
2820 Fifth Street
Davis, CA 95618-7759
Tel: (530) 204-4040
Fax: (530) 759-1665
Email: gilbert@parklegal.com